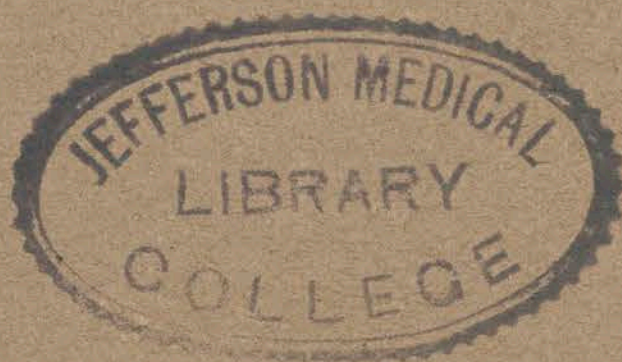
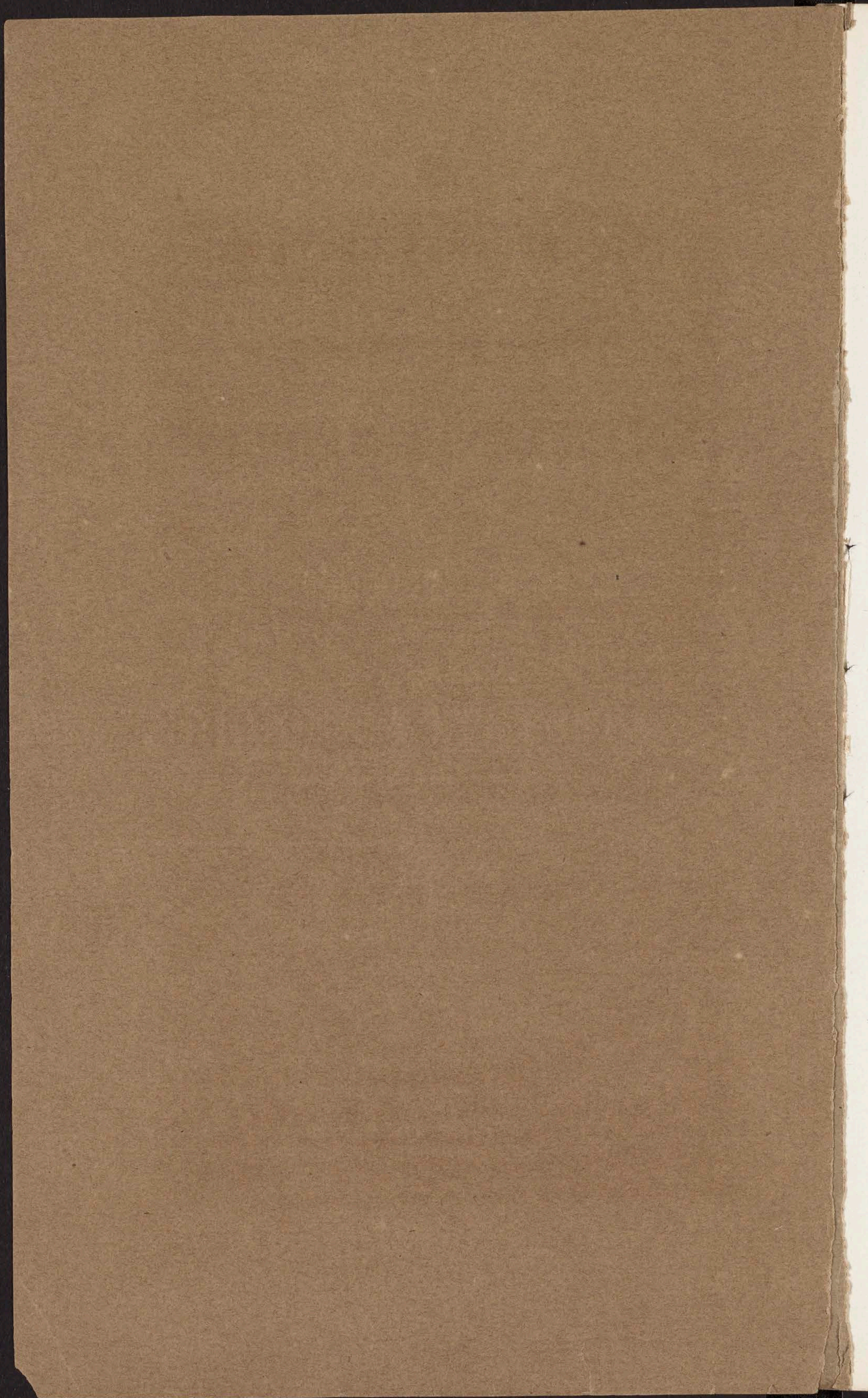


VERTICAL FILE

J. M. C. opening addresses
J. Bache.

DR. DUNGLISON'S
INTRODUCTORY LECTURE
TO THE COURSE ON
INSTITUTES OF MEDICINE,
NOVEMBER 3, 1845.





AN
INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,
DELIVERED BEFORE THE CLASS OF
INSTITUTES OF MEDICINE,

IN
JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE,

NOVEMBER 3, 1845.

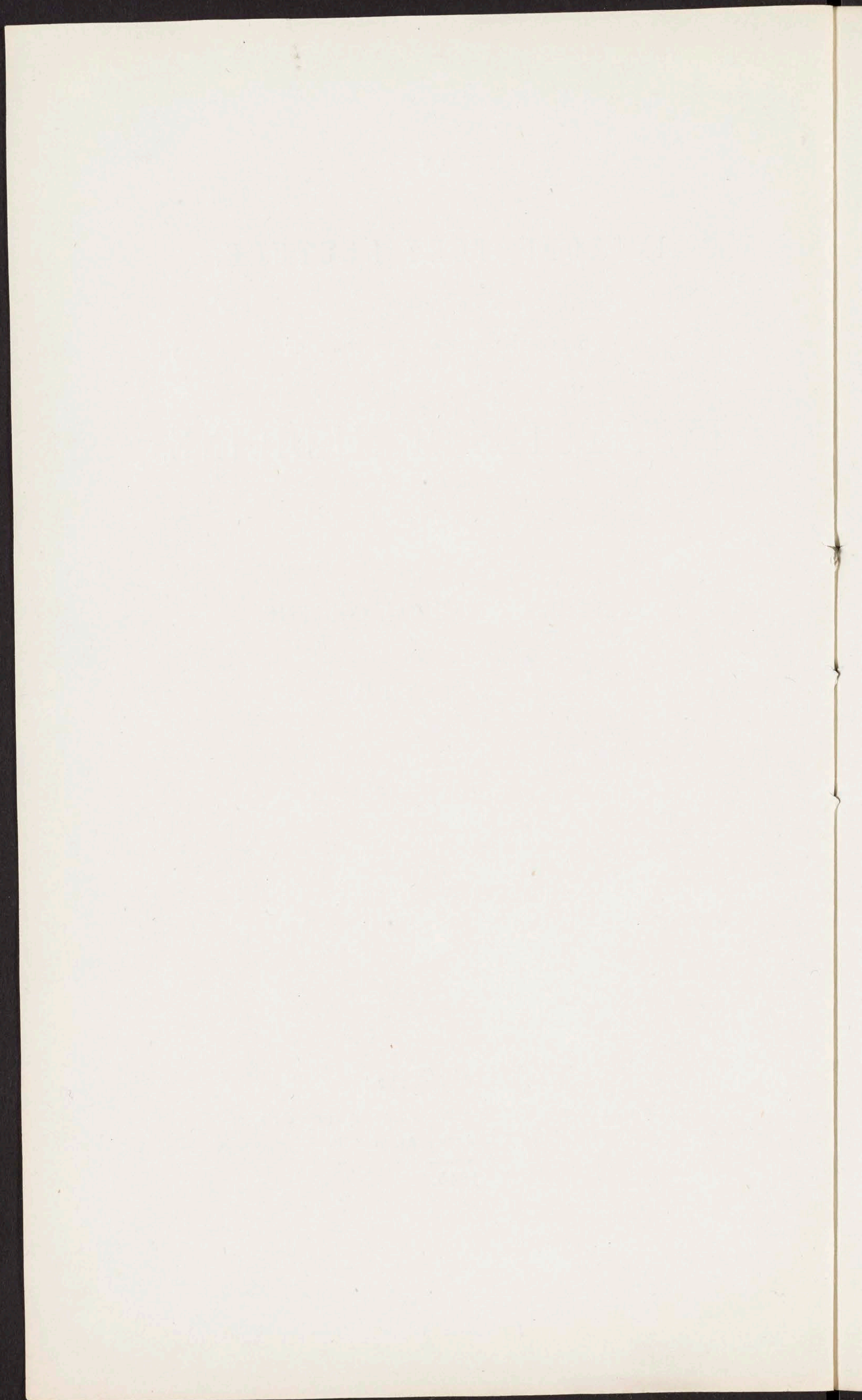
BY ROBLEY DUNGLISON, M. D.

PUBLISHED BY THE CLASS.

Philadelphia:

Merrihew & Thompson, Printers,
No. 7 CARTER'S ALLEY.

1845.



CORRESPONDENCE.

Philadelphia, December 5th, 1845.

Dear Sir,—At a meeting of the Jefferson Medical Class held on Saturday evening last, it was unanimously

Resolved, that a Committee be appointed to wait upon Dr. Robley Dunglison and express to him the thanks of the Class for his very able and appropriate Introductory Lecture, delivered on the third of November last, and that a copy of the same be requested for publication.

Permit us, Sir, in communicating the above resolution, to add our most sincere hope that you will comply with the request of the Class.

Yours most respectfully,

D.^r B. PHILLIPS, of Va., President.
 HUGH W. HOLCOMBE, Va., Secretary.
 J. T. SCALES, Tenn.
 W. P. ROUANT, La.
 J. E. WHALEY, S. C.
 W. A. BANKS, Me.
 T. G. SPINDLE, Ky.
 B. HENDRY, N. J.
 J. NOYS, R. I.
 W. C. FOSTER, Ind.
 H. K. BOARDMAN, Conn.
 W. P. EWING, Va.
 W. A. MARKS, Pa.
 R. GIBBON, N. C.
 H. N. JOY, N. Y.
 W. C. SCOTT, Ohio.
 J. H. PAUL, N. H.
 H. G. STARK, Miss.
 W. C. DUNCAN, Mo.
 A. S. COLE, Fa.
 T. A. ELIASON, D. C.
 G. W. GRAVES, Ga.
 D. S. BAKER, Ill.
 J. L. ORD, Mich.
 W. T. SPAULDING, Ala.
 S. D. M. JAMESON, Md.
 E. A. WILD, Mass.
 P. M'CARTNEY, Ireland,
 EUGENE BILLON, France,
 SANTIAGO SIFRE, Porto Rico.
 JOHN DAWSON, British Birmah, India.
Committee.

TO DR. R. DUNGLISON.

Franklin Bache, Esq. J. 11/14.

Philadelphia, 109 S. 10th street, Dec. 5, 1845.

Gentlemen,—Anxious at all times to accord with the expressed wishes of the Medical Class, I cheerfully place in your hands the manuscript of the Introductory Lecture, which they are desirous of publishing.

Upwards of a month has elapsed since it was delivered, so that an estimate may now be formed of the number and deportment of the students in attendance; and it is most gratifying to me to be able to state, that whilst the entire Medical Class is by far the largest that has ever been within the walls of Jefferson Medical College, it is, at the same time, decidedly one of the most respectful and attentive.

Accept, gentlemen, my thanks for your kind communication to me of the wishes of the Class, to whom, through you, I present my affectionate consideration; and believe me

Faithfully yours,

ROBLEY DUNGLISON.

Messrs. D. B. PHILLIPS, HUGH W. HOLCOMBE, &c. &c.

Committee of the Class of Jefferson Medical College.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

WERE I, gentlemen—veteran lecturer as I am—to say, that I appear before you unmoved, I should do but little justice to the feelings that possess me. For nearly twenty successive years I have presented myself, at this season, before a medical class; and never, on a solitary occasion, have I entered upon my responsible duties without emotion.

Once more I commence my annual course of instruction. Again, many well known and encouraging faces confront me to listen to lessons of experience, which may enable them to attain that goal, which is to be the termination of their collegiate attendance, and to renew those important relations, which, for a brief period, have been suspended.

Other faces not yet familiar—and many such are amongst the throng—destined to be equally esteemed and cherished, have sought, for the first time, this temple of science, to worship at its shrine, and to be inspired with the sacred flame which may light them to prosperity and honor. Others, again, may be destined to receive lessons of inspiration at another fane, and cheer us with their presence on this occasion, to honor the great cause in which we are mutually engaged, and to exhibit that there ought to be no party contentions in the great Republic of Science; but that all should participate cheerfully, harmoniously, and energetically in the same noble object. To all of you, “Tros Tyriusve,” no matter whence you come, or whither you are destined, in the name of the Medical Faculty of this Institution, most cordially do I bid you welcome to these halls.

I know well the disconsolate feelings, which may temporarily possess such of you as have quitted, for the first time, your parental roofs, to sojourn amongst those who are strangers to you. I can well recollect when first thrown, at a very early age, on my own guidance, to decide by my unaided judgment on the right and the wrong; heart-broken at my recent separation from all that were most dear to me; solicitous for the future, necessarily hid in darkness; and *alone*, for the first time, amidst hundreds of thousands. How bitterly did the feeling of utter isolation—of entire solitude—impress me. At this time, after many long years have passed, I can vividly recall the overpowering emotions. Beautifully and accurately have the feelings I endured, and which many of you experience at this time, in your recent change from the scenes of rural to those of civic life, been depicted by one of the greatest—if not the most moral—of modern poets:

“To sit on rocks; to muse o’er flood and fell;
 To slowly trace the forest’s shady scene,
 Where things that own not man’s dominion dwell,
 And mortal foot hath ne’er or rarely been:
 To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
 With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
 Alone, o’er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
 This is not solitude; ’tis but to hold
 Converse with nature’s charms, and view her stores unroll’d.
 But midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men;
 To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
 And roam along, the world’s tired denizen,
 With none who bless us, none whom we can bless;
 Minions of splendor, shrinking from distress!
 None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
 If we were not, would seem to smile the less
 Of all that flatter’d, follow’d, sought, and sued;
 This is to be alone—this, this is solitude.”

Yet, my friends, you will not be amongst strangers. Already, many of you have become personally known to those, whose

anxious care will be to aid you in the important pursuits which have drawn you hither, and to smooth your path to distinction and honor. Well do I remember how rapidly, in my case, the feelings of solitariness vanished, when my mind became occupied in listening to, and reflecting on, the doctrines so ably inculcated by many of the justly celebrated professors who taught in the famed seat of medical learning, which I visited; and such I doubt not will be your experience, after you have become thoroughly engaged and interested in the lessons of instruction delivered here.

You commence your professional education with us under circumstances by no means the same with you all. Your preliminary education has been passed,—with some under more fortunate circumstances than with others. It would be too late, therefore, for me to dwell on the value of certain preliminary attainments which you may not possess; or, by drawing a contrast, to make those whose opportunities have been restricted, despair of becoming learned and honoured in their profession. Undoubtedly, you ought to be acquainted with the learned languages,—the Greek, from which most of our scientific terms are formed; and the Latin, which is in many countries—not in all—the language of prescriptions. I shall not urge, however, the importance of this knowledge—which I would be one of the last to contest—for the simple reason, that, with most of you, the time has gone by when its attainment—if not already effected—was practicable. In certain of the medical schools of this continent, it is required, that the candidate for graduation should be able to translate from Celsus, or the *Conspectus* of Gregory, or if he has obtained his degree elsewhere, he is subjected to this examination before he is examined as to his medical acquirements. Such is the case with the medical board of Upper Canada; and

it has not unfrequently happened, that there, as elsewhere, a well informed medical graduate has been rejected in the preliminary examination, so that his medical acquirements have never been tested. With us no such preliminary examination is demanded. Our office is to teach you as we find you, and I may offer you who stand in need of it—if any such there be—the consolation, that an extensive knowledge of either of the dead languages, although *most desirable*, is assuredly not indispensable.

In the very earliest copy of the enactments of the University of Virginia, it was determined by its illustrious founder, and his able coadjutors, that no diploma should be given in the schools of the university to any one who had not passed such an examination in the Latin language as had proved him able to read the highest classics in that language, with ease, thorough understanding, and just quantity. “And if he be also a proficient in Greek,”—I speak now the language of the enactment—“let that too be stated in the diploma; the intention being, that the reputation of the university shall not be committed but to those, who, to an eminence in some one or more of the sciences taught in it, add a proficiency in those languages which constitute the basis of a good education, and are indispensable to fill up the character of ‘a well educated man.’ ”

It was the desire of Mr. Jefferson, that the student should be permitted to graduate—as is still the case—in either mathematics, chemistry, natural philosophy, law, or medicine; yet it was strange, that the regulation in question should not have struck that learned and philosophic individual as constituting a total prohibition to graduation in certain departments. To be able—as I have elsewhere remarked*—to read the highest

* Medical Student, 2d edit. Philad. 1844.

classics in the Latin language "with ease, thorough understanding, and just quantity," would, of itself, demand as much time as the majority of American youths are capable of devoting to the whole of their collegiate instruction. Accordingly, the Faculty of Professors early and judiciously suggested a modification of the enactments relative to graduation, which was at once adopted by the Board of Visitors. As it now stands, it merely requires, that every candidate for graduation in any of the schools shall first of all give the Faculty satisfactory proofs of his ability to write the *English* language correctly.

Still, most advisable is it, that the aspirant for medical honours should know the languages of antiquity. It is delightful to be able to peruse the works of the fathers of physic, in the languages which they spake and wrote. In every science, too, the technical language is founded on the Greek, and hence a moderate acquaintance with it enables the student to store away in his mind, and to comprehend the various terms of science with much greater ease than when he is not possessed of such valuable aids to understanding and to memory. A want of knowledge of the Greek does not, however, positively preclude the acquisition of medical terminology, any more than a want of knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon precludes the attainment of English words, which derive their origin from it.

The utility of Latin to the physician is even more marked. Both here and in Great Britain, the custom is to write prescriptions in that tongue; but some of the continental nations of Europe have abandoned it, and now employ their own vernacular. This is the case in France. One or other ought certainly to be used exclusively; and not a jumble of English and Latin, such as we are perpetually doomed to witness in the prescriptions of those whose preliminary education has been neglected; and not merely in such as are written extemporaneously, but in

books emanating from Professors, who ought to be "learned." Where—as in country situations—the prescriptions of the physician are compounded by his office students, it need scarcely be said, that no young man is fit to enter upon the duty, unless he is so far acquainted with the Latin language as to be able to comprehend, after a little instruction, the various directions that may be given for the preparation of officinal and extemporaneous formulæ. Here—in the cities—the physician rarely compounds his own prescriptions. He writes them, however, or professes to write them in Latin; they are then sent to the apothecary, who compounds them, and, to compound them understandingly, must have a certain acquaintance with that language. To avoid grave mistakes, then, this amount of knowledge is indispensable. Serious accidents have, indeed, arisen from ignorance on this point. Chitty, in his "Medical Jurisprudence," relates, that an action of slander arose between two medical practitioners,—the plaintiff, an apothecary—who, in England, is a sub-physician, having undergone a regular medical education—and the defendant, a physician,—which arose from the latter having prescribed some cathartic medicine for a nervous and costive old lady. The prescription, after directing the constituents of the medicine, added "*Repetatur si opus sit*;" "Let it be repeated if necessary." The apothecary being absent, and his young man just from school—the latter, instead of construing the prescription in this manner, wrote on the label "to be repeated if it operates,"—translating "*si opus sit*," "if it operates." The consequence was, that the old lady, after having experienced the effects of the first dose, took another, and repeated it again and again, until she swooned from exhaustion. In alarm the physician was sent for, who incautiously exclaimed, and afterwards repeated to others:—

"Coleman has killed my patient!" For this the action was brought; when forty shillings damages, and about two hundred pounds costs, were awarded to the plaintiff.

Another, a well known case, is given by Chamberlaine in his "*Tirocinium Medicum*." A medicine was directed by a physician to be given to a newly delivered female, and to be repeated *pro re natâ*,—an expression constantly employed in prescriptions to signify, "as the thing may arise," or, in other words, "as occasion may require." The expression was not, however, familiar to a young compounder; who translated it *pro*, "for," *re*, "the thing," *natâ*, "born;" or, as he wrote it, "for the little thing just born;" so that the infant took a dose which was intended for the parent.

It is idle for us, however, to lay down the position, that an intimate knowledge of even the Latin language is indispensable to attain professional eminence. The distinguished Armstrong—distinguished in the annals of professional science—according to his biographer, Dr. Boott—a native of this country, living honoured and esteemed in London—was rejected before the Royal College of Physicians of London, on account of his deficiency in the Latin language, but subsequently passed that body. Dr. John Mason Good, too, the translator of Lucretius, whose name is associated in our minds with the idea of profound and varied learning—general and professional—failed at first in the same ordeal, but was afterwards successful.

I feel satisfied, that much evil results from the parade of what are considered indispensable studies, at the very threshold of your attendance upon lectures; and I am not solitary in this feeling. No one will—I think—suspect me of disparaging general or professional learning, or of desiring to lower the standard of education; yet I cannot consent to dishearten you—

as is often done—by placing before you a standard, which is far beyond my own attainments, or those of any one with whom I am acquainted, at home or abroad.

A profoundly educated physician of the present day, and a lover of learning, thus expresses himself on this head: “The different professions have one way of glorifying themselves, which is common to all. It is by setting forth a vast array of preparatory studies, and pretending they are *indispensable* in order to fit a man for the scientific exercise of the practical duties that belong to them. I have heard lawyers make such a mighty parade of the things which a man must know before he is called to the bar, that according to the average of human capacities not one in fifty has the smallest chance of mastering them; and of those who do master them not one in fifty can employ them to the uses for which they are intended. I once saw a list of books recommended by a professor of divinity to the study of those going into holy orders. They were more numerous than the majority of even studious men ever read in their whole lives; yet these were a few prolegomena introductory to the office of a parish priest.

“We too conceive that it befits our dignity to magnify ourselves at certain seasons. The commencement of a session is usually the time chosen; and then, what a crowd of wonderful things are marshalled by authority around the entrance of our profession! And through this crowd, it is implied, every man must press his way, before he can gain admission; as if we wished to guard and garrison ourselves against invaders, rather than to gain good and useful confederates! In the affair of literature are reckoned Latin, and Greek, and French, and Italian, and German. In the affair of science, mathematics, and metaphysics, and mechanics, and optics, and hydraulics, and pneumatics, mineralogy, botany, zoology, and geology. Such are the

portentous forms that guard the threshold. But further onward are placed anatomy—human and comparative and morbid ; physiology and pathology ; chemistry—general and pharmaceutical ; materia medica ; surgery—theoretical, clinical, operative, and ophthalmical ; medicine—theoretical, clinical, obstetrical, and forensical.

“ The general display of objects so grand and multifarious, is formidable enough, but not half so formidable as their representation in detail. Of the great cosmogony of medicine there are several departments, and each professor never fails to magnify his own, by counting the cost of time and labour, which you must be prepared to bestow if you wish to make any progress in it.”

There is positive evil in this glorification. If the acquisition of all these matters were indispensable, it would necessarily deter you from prosecuting your studies farther. I believe with Dr. Latham, that there is mischief in putting forth a vast inventory of miscellaneous things to be learned by those whose time is hardly sufficient for mastering that knowledge, which is obviously necessary for practical use ; and that it would be absurd to demand from students generally, whatever might be the time and opportunities at their disposal, a perfect literary and philosophical education in order to the exercise of their profession. They ought by all means to acquire as many languages as practicable—Greek, Latin, French and German, especially. They ought to obtain as good a scientific education as possible ; but the necessity under which most of them lie “ of exercising their profession early, requires, that they should become practitioners in the readiest manner, and it behooves us to specify nothing as indispensable, except what has immediate reference to professional knowledge.”

The same discouraging error in education strikes the office

student the moment he commences the study of his profession. The first book generally placed in his hands is the "Dispensatory" of my friends Drs. Wood and Bache—to the merit of which it is needless for me to bear my warmest testimony, as they are admitted by all. This valuable work being intended for the use of the apothecary as well as the physician contains much that is by no means indispensable to the latter,—that may, indeed, never enter into the list of his acquirements although he may become one of the greatest ornaments of his profession.

It has always been conceived by the authors of dispensatories, that they should be encyclopædias,—embrace the whole circle of the sciences, that minister directly or indirectly to pharmacology. To understand a dispensatory, then, requires that the student shall be more or less acquainted with those sciences, and that he shall especially comprehend botany, and, indeed, the whole domain of natural history. To illustrate by example, I may take an article from the vegetable, and another from the animal kingdom. The second article in the Dispensatory—which meets the student therefore at the very outset—is ACACIA, *Gum Arabic*—the concrete juice of *Acacia vera*, and other species of *Acacia*, which is said to be in *Polygamia monœcia*, according to the Sexual System; Natural Order, *Leguminosæ*; Tribe, *Mimoseæ*. The generic characters are described to be HERMAPHRODITE; *Calyx*, five-toothed; *Corolla* five-cleft, or formed of five petals; *Stamens*, 4—100; *Pistil*, one. *Legume*, bivalve. MALE, *Calyx*, five-toothed; *Corolla*, five-cleft, or formed of five petals. *Stamens*, 4—100.

Take, again, the description of CANTHARIS, *Spanish flies*. His dispensatory informs him, that it is in the class *Insecta*; Order, *Coleoptera*; Family, *Trachelides*; Tribe, *Cantharideæ*, of Latreille; and that its generic characters are: *Tarsi* entire; *nails* bifid; *head* not produced into a rostrum; *elytra* flexible,

covering the whole abdomen, linear, semicylindric ; *wings* perfect ; *maxillæ* with two membranous *laciniaë*, the external one acute within, subuncinate ; *antennæ* longer than the head and thorax, rectilinear ; first joint largest, the second transverse, very short ; *maxillary palpi* larger at tip." All this is excellent ; but obviously unintelligible to one whose attention has not been directed largely to the study of the natural sciences ; and such, it must be admitted, is the case with almost all medical students ; but few at least have made botany, or any branch of natural history, an object of special or preliminary study.

These remarks apply even more forcibly to the treatises on *Materia Medica* by Drs. Thomson and Pereira. *Mutton suet*—SEVUM of the Pharmacopœia of the United States—is an official article of the *Materia Medica* ; and is described in that national work as "the prepared suet of *Ovis Aries*," the sheep. Dr. Pereira, however, deems it necessary to give all the zoological characters of the sheep, generic and specific, with the figures of two rams, borrowed from another work, as if to convey the idea, that to judge of good suet a knowledge of the animal producing it is indispensable or advisable. Nay, in order to introduce LAC, "milk," he gives us a description of *Bos Taurus*—the Ox ; which he informs us is "an animal very anciently known and highly valued. It is repeatedly mentioned by Moses ;"—as if, in order to appreciate the qualities of milk, it were necessary or expedient to understand the natural history of the animal that furnishes it. Doubtless, as I have had occasion to remark, it would be well, that the physician should know the natural history of the animal whence he obtains his castor, his musk, &c., and that he should be acquainted with the botanical relations of the plants, whose preparations he prescribes ; but such a knowledge is no more *indispensable* than Greek is to an acquaintance with medical terminology. The

argument may, indeed, be extended to the consumer of the products of the animal and vegetable kingdoms as articles of diet. It would be well for him, no doubt, to be acquainted with the natural history of the ox, the sheep, the hog, &c., whence he derives his sustenance; yet, notwithstanding his ignorance on this point, universal experience demonstrates, that he has no difficulty in appropriating them to his dietetic necessities. Were we to lay down the proposition, that, in order to judge of a good beefsteak, we must be familiar with the natural history of the ox; or that, to appreciate the quality of his mahogany, the cabinet-maker must know the botanical history of *Swietenia Mahogani*,—it would be esteemed ludicrous. So, in regard to the articles of the *Materia Medica*, your principal attention has to be directed to them as *medicines*; and their history, in other relations, can only be regarded in the light of an accomplishment. Still, the time may, and I trust, will arrive, when an acquaintance with the different branches of natural history may be esteemed an essential preliminary study to the medical student; but as the schools are now constituted, any protracted inquiry into those subjects would manifestly be impracticable. In the few months which constitute a session of medical lectures, opportunity is scarcely afforded for teaching that which is indispensable to the physician.

Hereafter, with many of you, opportunity may offer for the attainment of these accomplishments,—luxuries, as they may be esteemed. You are here to acquire the strictly needful. The history of medicine affords you shining examples of individuals, possessed of unusual strength of mind and application, who have been enabled, after the completion of their medical studies, and even after they have entered upon the active duties of their profession, to acquire a considerable knowledge of the ancient languages, and even to become eminent for their learning;

whilst others have added largely to the domain of natural history; and others, again, have been distinguished for general literary and scientific attainments.

The most active professional life affords numerous opportunities for improvement, provided a proper system be observed. "How is it," said one professional friend to another, "that you are able to accomplish so much in your study? I find, on returning home, that I am fatigued,—am anxious to rest the short time I remain there, and have no opportunity for mental application." "Yet those are the very opportunities," his friend remarked, "which are embraced by me. My maxim is,—take care of the minutes, and the hours will take care of themselves." Commence early, then, to employ well those minutes, and you will be astonished at the amount of mental exertion, which you are capable of accomplishing. Some of the most valuable of the works of Sir Astley Cooper appeared at a time when he was more occupied than any professional individual had perhaps ever been. But if we are astonished at the productive powers of certain of our contemporaries, how far are they cast into the shade by those of our predecessors. Frederic Hoffmann, who made the important addition to theory—medical and physiological—of the influence of the nervous system on the phenomena of life, wrote many folio volumes, the very titles of which, as detailed by Haller in his '*Bibliotheca Medica*' extend to no less than *thirty-eight quarto pages*!

At the commencement of your studies here, you are often at a loss as to the best mode in which your time should be employed, so as to reap full advantage from the opportunities afforded you:—too often, indeed, the course you adopt is one calculated rather to retard than to facilitate your progress. Most of you, probably, are impressed with the idea, that it is important

for you to read over at night, in approved works, the subject-matter of the lectures delivered during the day. Nothing, in my opinion—and I have long watched the operation of such a system unbiassedly—can be more injurious. It will be admitted by all—it has long been admitted in regard to other professions—that six hours in the day are as much as can generally be employed profitably in study. Six full hours are daily occupied by you in attendance on lectures. Now, there can be no difference between reading yourselves for six hours, and in being read to for the same period; except, indeed, that most persons receive ideas orally delivered with less fatigue than by reading. Were I, therefore, to recommend you to read for several hours at night, after having been occupied in reading, or in being read to, for so many hours during the day, the required amount of reading would strike every one as far beyond what can be judicious. Such a course might encourage and teach you to *read*, but not to *think*. Instead of reading, therefore, at night, I would advise that you should reflect on the chief points to which your attention has been directed by your professors during the day; and only to refer to approved text books, should your memory fail you, or doubts and difficulties arise, which may require to be removed. From positive experience I can declare to you, that much more real knowledge is acquired in this manner than by the plan usually adopted. Especially is this objectionable course apt to be followed by those who are preparing for their final examinations. In their solicitude, they endeavour to devour every thing that has been written on the different departments of medicine; and, when the day of trial arrives, although they may be literally crammed with information, their minds are in the condition of a well-stocked, but miserably arranged warehouse, in which nothing can be found at the time when it is needed. Infinitely better

than this is the custom of forming what are termed "quizzing clubs," in which, by competent interrogation, the topics that have been illustrated by the different professors are constantly and agreeably revived, and re-impressed upon the minds of the members,—not simply a short time before the period for the examinations for a degree, but throughout the whole session.

To aid you in your nocturnal reflections, it may be well for you to make brief notes—catch-words,—certainly not to attempt to take down every thing the lecturer says; and perhaps even this plan should be confined to the more advanced student, inasmuch as the first-course student does not, at once, become accustomed to separate the more essential points, and may record an unimportant fact, whilst one of moment may pass by unheeded, and perhaps unheard. I have stated elsewhere, that at an inspection of a respectable college at Woolwich, in England, and in the class of chemistry, conducted by an accomplished and excellent professor—the late Dr. M'Culloch—the committee of inspection had the curiosity to look at the notes taken by one student, when they found, that the only point he had recorded was, that '*water will freeze!*'

In the degree of attention, which you bestow on the various departments, let me advise you to make no difference. The curriculum of lectures has been devised after deep and mature reflection as to the branches of the science to which the attention of the student ought to be devoted for at least two sessions. Such a period—it has been conceived—is required to enable him to attain a sufficient knowledge of them to present himself for graduation. How much has the mode of tuition in every department varied and improved, even within the last few years! ANATOMY is no longer confined to the exhibition of the parts of the body as they appear on dissection. A very imperfect ac-

quaintance with it would be possessed by one who is ignorant of general anatomy, and especially of histology or the minute anatomy of the tissues. The whole face of **PHYSIOLOGY** has changed; and **PATHOLOGY** has experienced corresponding mutations; for what is pathology but diseased physiology? The microscope has beautifully illustrated those departments; and the invention of the daguerreotypic or photo-electric microscope has enabled the observer—as you will see hereafter—to reproduce accurately the representation of minute objects, as seen by that instrument. **THERAPEUTICS**—general and special—have kept pace with the other branches; new remedies have become known, and added to **MATERIA MEDICA**, and the properties of old ones have become better appreciated. **SURGERY** has experienced rapid advancement: surgical pathology has kept pace in its progress with its sister branch of medicine; whilst the bold and skilful daring of the surgical operator has prolonged lives, which formerly would have been sacrificed; and, better still, the improved diagnosis and prognosis—and, I may add, therapeutics—of the prudent and instructed surgeon of the present day, have saved not only limbs but lives, by avoiding unnecessary operations, the performance of which it would have been considered, years ago, the height of reckless imprudence to postpone. **OBSTETRICS**—a compound of medicine and surgery—has not lagged behind its kindred departments; and **CHEMISTRY** has diffused its lights over objects, which were previously hid in darkness, and illumined them with the brightness of day. You will find, that in the department of physiology in its various applications, the explanation of many of the functions rests almost wholly on chemistry. The pathologist will instruct you, that aberrations of function admit of like elucidation from it; whilst *materia medica* absolutely demands its aid. It would be

a serious error, then, to mistake its importance. The fact, too, that every well educated gentleman is more or less conversant with the truths of chemical science, ought to stimulate the medical student to bestow marked attention upon it; for what physician would consent to find himself deficient in a branch, which forms a part of every scheme for a full medical education; and with which, therefore, he ought to be expected to be especially familiar.

To devote attention to all those branches,—provided you pursue the course I have advised, will not engross the whole of your time. You may still have ample opportunity for the enjoyment of social intercourse; but let it be intercourse, which will ennoble, not debase you. Cast—as I have already remarked—perhaps for the first time on your own resources; unaware of the wiles and the snares that may be laid for you; in the frankness of ingenuous youth, admitting unsuspectedly all that seemeth fair, and apt to take everything that glistens for the precious metal,—you may be tempted to desert the paths of propriety and duty, and become lost in the wilderness of idleness and dissipation. Guard, my young friends, against the first false step: avoid temptation in every shape, whether it appear under the bewitching smiles of the siren, or the allurements of proffered friendship. Cultivate the acquaintance of the wisest and the best,—of all who can augment your stock of information and virtue. The title of '*medical student*'—whatever impression may exist to the contrary—is a passport here to social consideration; and if, by imprudence, the student loses the position into which he would have been cordially admitted, the fault is his own. His profession has, at all times, been esteemed most noble;—by some, indeed, the most noble of human avocations, and in its ranks have flourished some of the greatest

ornaments of physical and moral science. With the ancients the fabulous Apollo was not only the God of Physic, but of Poetry and Eloquence. Doubtless, your profession should be the main object of your attention; no class of the community is, however, expected to be more generally informed than physicians; yet, strange to say, although this is universally admitted, extra-professional observers are apt to be jealous of their devotion to any pursuit, which may seem calculated to divert them from what is considered to be the practical exercise of their own; and so convinced have some distinguished individuals been of the existence of this feeling, that they have carefully concealed their extraneous accomplishments until their professional reputation has been firmly established. The words of the great poet—depicting, as they do, the prevalent sentiment in regard to this devotion to one pursuit—should be received with due allowance:

“To know
That which before us lies in daily life
Is the prime wisdom; what is more is fume,
Or emptiness or fond impertinence,
And renders us in things which most concern,
Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.”

It has been well said, that to be ignorant of all but medicine, would be a sad misfortune;—whilst to be regarded as thoroughly versed in your own profession, and well informed in the various branches of the liberal sciences, must be most desirable. Necessarily thrown amongst the various classes of society, and placed in intimate association with the learned and the wise, it should be the aim of the physician so to augment his general knowledge as to enable him to carry on, with due intelligence, an interchange of ideas on topics of general, and even of special interest. “The medical men of England,” says a recent eloquent writer on the state of the profession there, and his remarks apply with equal force to its condition here—“do, and

will continue to keep pace with the age in which they live, however rapidly it may advance in the course of improvement. They need not be trained and sophisticated according to any compulsory discipline in order to do so. By such accomplishments as are congenial with their professional studies, yet unforced and unpretended,—by such moral qualities as, however they are engendered, are, I am persuaded, refined and exalted by their daily habits and avocations,—their character has been and always will be, esteemed honorable, and their influence great.” * * * “And yet they are little conversant with the vulgar means of popular credit. They are singularly abstinent from all passionate interference with subjects of mere temporary interest. No sect, no party in politics, has reckoned many of our profession among its clamorous advocates; but wherever there has been any association of good men for laudable ends—wherever any institution has sprung up having science or literature for its object—or any great scheme of benevolence been designed or perfected—medical men have been always found among their first, their most zealous and useful promoters.” * * * “What has been, will, I trust, ever continue to be; for I have a conservative jealousy of the rank due to my profession. I wish to see physicians still instituted in the same discipline, and still reared in fellowship and communion with the wisest and best men; and that not for the sake of what is ornamental merely, and becoming to their character, but because I am persuaded, that that discipline, which renders the mind most capacious of wisdom and most capacious of virtue, can hold the torch, and light the path, to the sublimest discoveries in every science. It was the same discipline which contributed to form the mind of Newton, of Locke, of Harvey and of Sydenham.”

This is the testimony of one of our own brethren, and, therefore, may be esteemed partial; but in all ages there have not

been wanting eminent individuals who have borne strong testimony to the exalted character of the profession you have chosen, and who have elevated it above every other avocation. The reverend and learned Parr—one of the ripest scholars of his day, who had held communion with the virtuous and gifted of all ranks and callings—remarked:—"whilst I allow that peculiar and important advantages arise from the appropriate studies of the three learned professions, I must confess, that in erudition, in science, and in habits of deep and comprehensive thinking, the preëminence must be assigned, in some degree, to physicians."

The profession of your choice holds out, then, the prize of honorable distinction in the estimation of the wise and the learned. Cultivate it in a way to demonstrate that you are worthy of it. Regard it not only as a *noble* but a *liberal* profession, and feel and act as if all those who enter honorably within its pales belong to one brotherhood. Here, at the very commencement of your career, you find yourselves travelling, although in different conveyances, to one great terminus,—your ultimate objects identical. Let peace and good will reign amongst you. Let no unworthy rivalry induce you to disparage each other's useful exertions; and thus, in after life, you may avoid those occasional scenes of strife and discord, which have too often discredited an honorable profession, and drawn upon it ridicule and contempt.

Under the possession of the kindlier sentiments, no distracting influence can interfere with your devotion to the great objects which brought you hither. Lessons of wisdom and experience will be received in the zealous spirit in which they are presented; and between the teacher and the taught, sentiments of affectionate interest will arise, which time and distance may diminish, but can never obliterate.

Jan. 16. 1846.

